



GROUNDCOVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

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Making policy and judging success based on Gross National Happiness



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

Happiness... is it pure joy, simple satisfaction, a mindset, or a neurological adaptation that promotes actions that perpetuate the species? I find joy in laughter – especially that of young children; in unexpected encounters with natural beauty; in singing or playing with others as one; and in the experience of deep friendship. It seems to have to do with losing my sense of solitary identity in favor of being becoming one with something transcendent.

Satisfaction comes to me from making progress toward a goal or skill I'm trying to master. There is a lot of

satisfaction in my life, but there are only flashes of joy. Overall, I'd say I'm happy; not joyous, but happy. As I've aged, my happiness is based more on what I produce than on what I'm able to acquire. In fact, letting go of things is now a source of happiness!

Sadness comes to me when I lose someone special or am aware of a person or animal frantic at their predicament with no way to escape save gnawing off a limb and I can't set them free. I'm also sad when I lose part of my past, which for me recently has been sports I enjoy that my body no longer has the capacity to support. The loss of the Parthenon restaurant, where I and my college boyfriend developed a taste for spinach pie and souvlaki, was also poignant. I was very sad when I took my kids to the Grand Canyon and other parks I treasured and found that the wonderful interpretive centers had been turned into gift shops and treasured trails had been closed because without the requisite maintenance and supervision the habitat was endangered.

Public policy in Michigan makes me sad as I think of the families who will be unable to pay off usurious lenders this winter because their tax refund has shrunk by a few hundred dollars, who will likely not get health care because Michigan is inclined to snub the federal offer to fund a Medicaid expansion that would qualify for inclusion those

at 130 percent of the poverty line (about \$43,000 for a family of four), just as we cut short the length of time Michiganders can receive federal unemployment benefits. The safety net is stretched so thin that bodies are crashing through on a regular basis. While some of these changes might enhance the business climate for some, does it create an environment in which the many can be happy?

The tiny nation of Bhutan measures its success based on its Gross National Happiness (GNH), rather than Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The premise is that the ultimate desire of every person is happiness, and therefore, a good government will create conditions that enable its citizens to be enduringly happy. Development projects and policies in Bhutan are evaluated on the GNH scale, which values the preservation of valued natural and cultural features and collective well-being in addition to economic opportunity.

Research on the correlation between income and happiness has found that increased income has a very small correlation with happiness for most people. The exception is for people who live in the conditions of poverty, in which money can help provide basic necessities like food, shelter, and transportation. Once people reach the middle class, however, additional

income tends to have little effect on happiness.

Perhaps if we followed the lead of tiny Bhutan and judged our nation's success by measuring our GNH rather than GDP, we would not have people working multiple jobs and unable to afford stable housing. And the notion of a fiscal cliff would be an absurdity. Since the 1970s, the United States has been so over-focused on profitability that our relationships, morals, and even pleasure have been redefined by monetary considerations.

Something Tony, our salesperson at Liberty and Main, has taught me is that a person can be a lot happier with sufficiency than with the strains of maintaining the trappings of success. That used to be ingrained in the people of Michigan. When I moved here in the early 70s, what attracted me was the basic decency of people of the people I'd met, which was lacking in the New Jersey area where I was raised. Education was well-funded, and people took care of each other and were nice to strangers and neighbors, alike.

Rather than competing with incentives and regulations that degrade the quality of life for the many to attract businesses from the coasts or south, can we find our way back to a Michigan that values its own people and resources and creates sufficiency and happiness for all?

for some job training or maybe helping them with some social skills to help them get a job and keep a job. Your paper does a great job, and I have learned some things from your vendors about some of the issues the homeless face.

Sincerely,
V. Elaine Nutt

Reader responds to pervasive injustice

Dear Editor,

I was very interested in your article on pervasive injustice. I thought maybe the Innocence Project at the University of Michigan might be interested in your article. I have taken a course through the senior program at U-M for seniors, and a Dr. Tanay, a retired forensic psychiatrist, has a book or two out about the injustice of our justice

system. Thanks again for sharing this experience through the Groundcover newspaper. I buy it every month and find it very informative.

Also, I read a letter in the Ann Arbor paper about the main library downtown and thought the writer had some good suggestions about how the library might better serve the homeless, like providing a space and an opportunity

Feudalism?

Dear Editor,

The recent enactment of right to work laws by the GOP led State legislature brings American Feudalism, where workers have no protections, one giant step closer to reality. After many years of keeping Democrats at arm's length, this disaster should be no surprise. Democracy works best when the centers of power remain somewhat balanced!

Sincerely,
Paul Lambert

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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“No, but I could be”



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Pastor, Bethlehem United Church of Christ

I met an area artist a few months back when I bought two prints of a piece of his artwork, one for friends and one for me. More recently, he has made some postcards of that print. I ordered a few postcards as well. Since he was going to be in downtown Ann Arbor the day I ordered them, he agreed to drop the cards by Bethlehem. As it turns out, he came to the church fairly early that morning. I was walking down the hallway while talking with a member of the congregation and I saw a man glancing at the bulletin board. He looked familiar, but I couldn't place him. The woman walking with me

noticed an envelope in his hand and thought he might be bringing some *Groundcover News* money to the office. An office volunteer, she asked him, “Oh, are you from Groundcover?” “No,” he replied and continued, “but I could be.” The minute he spoke I recognized him and realized he was carrying an envelope of postcards. I proceeded to introduce artist and office volunteer. He didn't mind in the least being mistakenly identified at first.

His response “No, but I could be,” stuck with me. It was a gracious answer to the question asked and also a delightful statement about the connections among us even if we appear on the surface to be so different from one another. The response imagined a possibility of shared well-being. Pondering his statement, I remembered a parallel sense of connection for me around the AIDS quilt in the early 1990s. As a pastor through the 1980s and a pastor

and hospice chaplain in the 1990s, before a new generation of drugs was available for those living with AIDS, I knew a number of people whose lives were touched directly by the epidemic. Two men were quietly dying of AIDS in a Massachusetts congregation I served in the second half of the 80s. After one of them, Benny, died, his best friend Debbie sewed a beautiful square for the AIDS quilt. In the corners she embroidered the names of a number of us who formed his circle of love and care. I remember how graced I felt to have my name included among those on Benny's square and in the growing quilt.

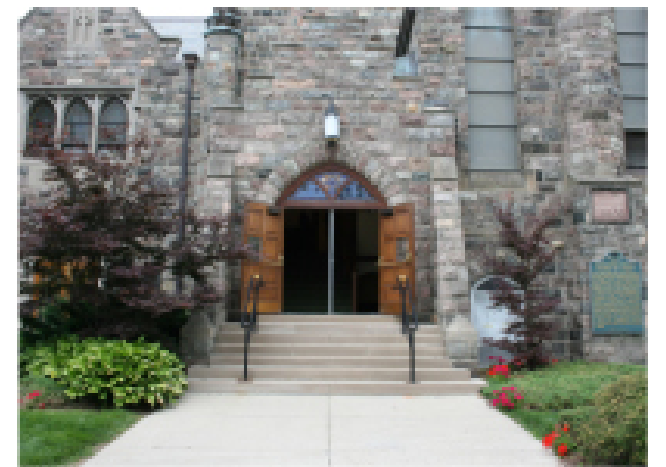
Those living and dying with AIDS at the end of the 20th century, like those who have struggled with homelessness over these last decades and years, are used to others walling themselves off from harsh judgments. That judging often communicates that one has

nothing in common with you or your issues, and furthermore, that one dwells in a far better life place than you do. An artist's gentle statement, “No, but I could be,” expressed in contrast an openness to finding common ground and supporting one another. I have written it before and will probably write it again: the combination of people quite variously located is one of the sweetest treasures of the *Groundcover News* effort. The paper and its community promote an awareness that we are in this together. The paper and its community also provide countless moments for us to listen well to one another and to hear each other into speech, into artistic expression, and into collaborative activity. Isn't that indeed what being a loving human being is all about? I think it is! And so I am tenderly holding in hand and heart the accepting words of an area artist. They are words rich with the love of who we could be one with another.

*In My Blouse Pocket
Here
is a poem
in my blouse pocket,
folded into an origami
heart, and one can read
some thin words*

*as they cross over and around
folds, quick veins
traveling thick paper,
sending courage to continue
even when others laugh
at a heart so near my sleeve
for everyone to see—
this perpetual valentine
to the world.*

*If only they knew this about love:
Do what you can to render it visible.
— Karen L. Totten*



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5:00 pm ~ Fellowship
5:30 pm ~ Worship

February 13 ~ Ash Wednesday
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Meet Lonnie Baker, idea man

by Susan Beckett

His ever-present wide smile and dancing brown eyes invite you in when Lonnie suggests you buy Groundcover News.

He says, “Working for Groundcover has been a wonderful experience and I want to thank everyone involved, from the editor to the printer to the other vendors, and foremost, the wonderful customers who stop to speak to you every day, letting you know they care.

“The money I make enables me to pay rent and have a somewhat normal life. I use it to buy hygiene items, household basics, and an occasional cup of coffee or meal out. My Bridge Card (food stamps) only lasts me a couple of weeks. This cuts down on the number of meals I have to eat at Delonis. I made a lot of friends with the other vendors, too.”

Lonnie grew up in Detroit and came to Washtenaw County in 1983. He worked an assortment of jobs, even after becoming visually impaired at the age



of 27. Eventually, he recognized it was dangerous for him to continue working as a machine operator in a plastic mold injection plant and left. He transitioned from part-time to full-time in his side job working at the In and Out store on East University in Ann Arbor, where he did a bit of everything, from running the cash register to stocking shelves, cleaning and working security. The store manager used Lonnie's capability to keep the student employees on their toes.

House of Many Colors: a vision of tolerance

by Aimee Ciccarelli
Groundcover Vendor

The story I am about to tell was life-changing for me; an ordinary day that turned upside down and caused me to look at the world in a different way from that day forward. The year was 1998, and I was on Lake Michigan's coast.

On this particular day I woke up to a beautiful October, blue-sky morning. I was going to Jean Klock Park to collect rocks and beach glass, old tiles and driftwood. This is a favorite hobby of mine and I've been going there for decades. As I crossed over the bridge from Benton Harbor to St. Joseph, Michigan, I became aware of a detour in traffic. There was a police officer on horseback rerouting traffic. In contrast with the blue sky, he looked like something from another century, surreal and odd, out of place yet very real. I pulled up and asked him what was the detour for, and he informed me that there was a Ku Klux Klan rally on the bridge of M-63. This is the main coastal road along Lake Michigan and includes a bridge that opens up to let boats through.

I could not believe my ears that this was happening. Over my years of coming to St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, I had become aware of the differences and prejudice between the towns. St. Joseph

“My man, Lonnie, he can run this store all by himself,” Lonnie recalls the manager saying to the students when they all returned from the Christmas break.

Lonnie turned to temporary jobs after the In and Out. One he remembers fondly is cleaning out the ovens at Zingerman's, back when they had only the Detroit Street location.

police officer named Carmine who had a nice talk with me and agreed that he didn't like what they were doing either but he was just doing his job.

At that point, I proceeded to go on down to my beach, Jean Klock Park. This beautiful, deserted beach was my sanctuary for many years. It is there that I found peace of mind. I felt freed from the troubles of the world there. And I was able to pray and heal. It was, and is, my special place. But on this particular day, I had no peace. I could hear the rally from the beach – they had megaphones and speakers so their message was heard for miles. I felt force-fed; there was no way not to be aware of it. They had blocked the main road and boat passage. I wondered how they could have so much power?

At any rate, I wanted to be as far away from it as I could. I walked far down the beach to the farthest breaker wall. Standing there, I saw something blue shimmering in the water about 15 to 20 feet out. I hiked up my jeans and waded out to get it. It was the edge of an old bird bath with a stork on it. I called it Stork Reality, like stark reality, and as I stood there holding it an idea came to me. I really feel it was a message from God, something to counterbalance what was happening on that day. I decided I wanted to build a community center called The House of Many Colors to help educate and

Lonnie has taken some business courses that he hopes will one day help him run his own company. An idea man, Lonnie thought of flavored popcorn and vitamin gum long ago, but others brought them to market before he could. He is currently developing ideas for phone apps.

“I ain't perfect but I pray every day,” says Lonnie, commenting that he became Christian in 1999. “I never sold a paper without saying a prayer first.”

“I don't think like I used to think,” Lonnie muses. He adds that he is now more compassionate, sincere and respectful.

That change paid great dividends around the holidays. He received a special Christmas present from June at St. Mary's Student Parish. From Pavel, who has become a friend, he received boots, top-quality long underwear, and thermal socks – just what he needed to stay warm.

Lonnie says that the Best of Groundcover Anthology was another present, and, “I think you should print

celebrate racial, cultural, social, and sexual diversity. I thought the rounded edge of this old bird bath could be the cornerstone and people could come and donate parts of the structure from things washed up on the lake: rocks and tiles and bricks, stained glass windows made from beach glass. It would be like a patchwork quilt of natural materials. Thus, a House of Many Colors.

At one point, I came to live in Coloma, Michigan, directly north of Jean Klock Park. I began a representational version of my vision. I wanted it to tell the stories of the two cities and also a history of the equal rights movement. The walls on the inside of the building could tell a story to give people another view than the ones they may have been exposed to before. A chance to hear both sides of the story.

I believe in this vision and what it represents. It is one of the main goals and dreams I have aspired to achieve in my lifetime. Perhaps by writing this article I will inspire other people to become involved. As the saying goes, “If you can conceive it, you can achieve it.” If anyone is interested in this project or just has comments or ideas, please e-mail me at ciccarelli.a5@gmail.com. Thank you for your time, and remember: we are all here for a reason. I hope my story will inspire many to follow their dreams, whatever they may be. God Bless.

Gretchen Driskell: on being a new Rep and addressing poverty and education

by Susan Beckett

Newly sworn-in Michigan Representative Gretchen Driskell knows she has her work cut out for her with an enormous learning curve dead-ahead.

Her massive district extends from Salem Township to Manchester, spanning seven school districts, including Saline, where she just wrapped up a 14-year run as mayor. A mother of two college students and one Naval Academy attendee, she has hardly been sitting on her hands up until now, working as a commercial realtor as well as Mayor, and serving on numerous task forces.

We spoke at the conclusion of her first half-week in office, a chaotic time for a new member who ousted an opposition member and inherited nothing in the way of office equipment or staff. Still, Driskell graciously came to the Groundcover office for an interview on her way home to Saline, and confronted many questions for which nothing in her background prepared her.

“I have a lot to learn,” Driskell said. “Poverty issues are not common in Saline, but we do have more now. Some apartment buildings have gone to Section 8 [subsidized rent] in the last four years and they need more services.”

Beyond setting up her Lansing office and starting to hire staff with her total budget of \$70,000, her first legislative business was joining the governor and the rest of the House and Senate to agree on the amount of money available to the state for budgeting in the coming year. Driskell's reaction to the January Consensus Revenue Estimating Conference (CREC):

“It's really depressing, to be honest with you. Having been elected for 20 years, I can tell you, it is really easy to cut taxes and extremely difficult to raise taxes. That's the one thing, it was right there for me, the numbers were right there in black and white, where the tax burden is right now is on individuals. There are arguments that businesses shouldn't pay taxes but I personally do not agree. They use services like everybody else does; they use our infrastructure, they use our services, and I think they should pay for them.

“With revenue falling, there is about \$200 million less money available for schools and other high-priority needs. The tax burden is being shifted from business to people. It is happening



without people being aware of it. The elimination of the Michigan Business Tax took away \$1.8 billion. Most of that is being made up with higher sales tax and taxes on pensions, and the elimination and reduction of tax credits that people depend on. I worry that people won't realize until they file that they won't be getting back as much money as they planned on.”

Driskell does not expect to be able to do much to change that in her first term. She holds that more money needs to go to providing human services and that, as the economy improves, there should be an opportunity to help out those who are not benefiting from the improving economy – people who are on the edge or at higher risk. Those policies are developed in the Committees on House Tax Policy and Children, Health and Families, to which Driskell does not expect to be appointed.

She is equally pessimistic that there will be public transportation improvements any time soon that could open new job opportunities for the underemployed. Efforts to link Detroit and Ann Arbor suffered a blow when rail was not included in the in the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) legislation passed in the recent lame duck session. Without some state funding, Michigan is out of the running for federal funding. The effort to create a county-wide bus system also imploded this fall. On the positive side, Driskell thinks the county has a sound 25-30 year transportation plan if it stays in the RTA.

On the subject of low-income housing and self-sufficiency programs, Driskell enthusiastically supports projects like Hamilton Crossing in Ypsilanti. There, residents' rent is proportional to their income, and a wide range of services, from childhood development resources

to financial literacy, are provided at the 144-unit complex.

Asked if she would be in favor of extending that model to other subsidized housing complexes, Driskell replied, “I think it would be great. I think that is part of the problem – that we don't give people the tools they need; we just say, “Figure it out.”

Addressing unintended consequences of laws that ensnare people in poverty, Driskell pledged to work with other county representatives to address some of Michigan's punitive measures that

keep low-income people trapped in the system and subject to ever-increasing financial penalties. That includes amnesty for people who were assessed driver responsibility fees prior to the policy's elimination in October of 2012, and for fines for the late payment of costs associated with prosecution and probation.

Education is Driskell's signature issue. Citing recent studies that clearly document the benefits of early childhood education for children, schools and society, she feels confident that the legislature will set aside funding for the Great Start program, which funds preschool for low-income families. She noted there are 30,000 four-year-old children who qualify for the program but are not being served because of insufficient funding. She is adamant, though, that the money should not come from the already-diminished School Aid Fund.

When asked about Governor Snyder's proposals to expand students' education options to include a mix-and-match menu of public, charter, and online courses from multiple school districts with funding following the student, Driskell expressed some misgivings. She was especially concerned about precipitously uncapping the limit on the number of charter schools without implementing the clear standards and accountability required of public schools. She also was wary of the state taking control away from local school districts.

“I think that local people can take care of their schools and their communities if they're given the proper tools,” said Driskell. “They've cut education funding, they've cut revenue sharing, and

then they say, ‘Go and make the schools stronger and the community stronger so that we can bring more businesses here. And the fact of the matter is, if you don't have the tools, you can't do it.

“And a lot of the issues around education are not just the school environment, it's also the environment of the community in general. If kids are sleeping on the couch or they don't have a stable home or breakfast in the morning, there are a lot of other challenges besides just in the classroom. I don't think people in the county realize how big a problem it is. The number of homeless kids has, I think, doubled in the last year. It's really shocking.”

She went on to say that repeated state cuts to revenue sharing and the School Aid Fund have left schools with insufficient means for responding to current challenges. One option she would look upon favorably is giving local communities more options for generating school revenue. She will use her first term in the legislature to pursue more funding for schools and clear standards for charter schools.

Driskell developed a working relationship with Governor Snyder through her involvement with the business accelerator SPARK, the Michigan Realtors Association, and the Southeast Michigan Regional Transportation Authority. They share a passion for growing and retaining talent and making Michigan a destination state, though they disagree on the roles of the private and public sector in doing so, and on the relative importance of taxes.

“I think that when CEOs decide where they want to move their businesses, they ask: ‘Do I want to my family to live here? Is this where I am going to be able to get good employees? Are employees going to want to live here, raise their kids here, spend their life here?’” said Driskell.

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Dr. King and the cradle-to-prison pipeline

by Susan Beckett

The interplay of the prison industrial complex and inequality was discussed in at least three of the 2013 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day presentations at the University of Michigan.

It was the central theme of Dr. Angela Davis' lecture, "Impediments to the Dream: the Prison Industrial Complex and the Dream," but Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center also touched on it in his keynote speech, suggesting that the high incarceration rate in the United States is linked to a conflict of interest in our justice system that needs criminals for self-perpetuation and expansion. He noted that, when legal suits are brought, the system being sued quickly settles, which avoids a precedent-setting ruling. The "Panel Discussion on Mental Health and the Prison Industrial Complex" yielded a key observation from attorney Deborah Golden: while the United States accounts for five percent of the world's population, 25 percent of all the world's prisoners are incarcerated here. Fellow panelist and social worker Elizabeth Kita suggested the cradle-to-prison pipeline has a psychological register that springs from the violence and dysfunction in many urban areas. The following observations are based on these presentations.

We are a prison nation. One out of every 37 adults in the United States is under the control of some kind of criminal justice system. One out of every 100 adults has been arrested. Prisons are disproportionately populated with people of color, especially African Americans. There are now more black men under control of the prison system than there were enslaved in 1860.

Prisons became the dominant form of punishment following the Civil War and the end of slavery. They were endowed with a paramilitary structure and became a dumping place for surplus laborers, many of whom were, in this way, returned to slavery. (The 13th Amendment included a caveat permitting the enslavement of convicted prisoners.)

"Prison devours people who have become part of the surplus population," according to Dr. Davis. It is where we hide things we don't want to think about.



Morris Dees of the Southern Poverty Law Center talks about poverty, immigrants rights and prisons.

"Race violence, vigilante violence... Protests stopped post-Trayvon Martin when Zimmerman was arrested. It shut down the protests," said Davis.

Detention centers are now the fastest-growing segment of the prison industrial complex. Last year there were 500,000 immigrants detained. Dees identified immigrant and economic rights as keystones in Dr. King's work for equality, and asserts they are major issues still today. Nearly all the 2.5 million people in prison are poor.

Prisons play a critical role in the profit-making of this country, from the exclusive contract for the soap sold in prison to the monopoly of the telecommunication company that contracts for prison phone calls. The prisoners have only the choice to buy or not; visitors cannot bring or send them anything, not even writing paper and envelopes. Prisons are the largest employers in many communities, and a host of others make their living from arrests, prosecutions and paroles.

The war on drugs and other policy shifts begun in the 1980s accelerated the incarceration rate, especially of African American men. Drug use was similar among whites but it was in the urban areas inhabited by minorities that officials concentrated their surveillance.

This failed 30-year campaign consumed vast financial resources and, along with the dismantling of the welfare system, added dysfunction to many families. Children raised by single parents without the resources to support them financially and emotionally, and educated in violent, overcrowded schools, have emerged as undisciplined adults. Many suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from the violence they experienced as youngsters – as witnesses, victims or offenders. Without a diagnosis and the resources to process their past, they wreak havoc in their lives and often end up in the correctional system where they experience still more violence.

Dr. King believed deeply in non-violence, not only as a strategy for success, but as the only viable basis for positive change. Violence begets more violence. Prisons are violent places.

Studies show that black men are over-diagnosed with psychosis and under-diagnosed for depression. The prevalent substance abuse, including medication dispensed in prison, is the coping mechanism they use to deal with the psychological effects of depression.

A high percentage of people enter

prison with undiagnosed PTSD, and many of those with schizophrenia and other mental illnesses who used to be in psychiatric facilities are now in the prisons. The conditions are so distressing for them that they can routinely spend all waking hours banging on the walls and screaming. This leads to neighbors eventually developing disorders of their own and often hurting their cellmates. The guards might stop the mayhem by putting the screaming person in solitary confinement, but this is like torture for someone trying to silence the competing voices in their heads.

There are 1,100 beds in solitary confinement in Michigan prisons. The justice system tries to avoid placing those with mental illness in solitary confinement as psychiatric conditions are exacerbated by stress. Still, they slip through the cracks.

Most prisons are stark, angular, and unrelentingly harsh with no natural light, and are disorienting, especially for those who are mentally unstable. Though beating prisoners is no longer common, they are still taunted by guards and subjugated by pepper

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Prisons could be places of healing

continued from page 6

spray in the eyes, by being chained to a bed, or by being isolated in solitary confinement, sometimes for years at a time.

Dr. King would cite the moral imperative of intervening in this cycle of pain, self-medication and violence. Shaka Senghor, an author who served 19 years in prison, asks, "Who do you want to come home: the monster who went crazy in solitary confinement?"

Prison could be a place for treatment, as it at least offers the stability of a place to sleep and three meals a day. The United Kingdom has therapeutic prisons where guards and prisoners have time each day for reflection. They discuss what happened, how they feel about it, and other ways they could have handled a difficult situation.

Many Michigan prisoners are medicated, but psychiatrist Tony Rome, Chief Psychiatric Officer for the Michigan Department of Corrections, stated plainly that medications alone rarely lead to substantive change: there must be a bridge often supplied by psycho-social or religious counseling. In light of this, the Corrections



Department has started a dialectic discussion therapy (DDT) group at Huron Valley Women's Prison. This self-awareness therapy helps them deal with negative life experiences, which is very important since the psyche reenacts unresolved trauma. DDT also helps identify and reject the criminal thinking that often has been absorbed.

Beth Kita, a clinical social worker for the California Department of

Corrections and Rehabilitation, provides counseling to those in the prisons and out on parole. She described the recurring, uninterrupted pipeline to prison – untreated trauma leading to neuroses, leading to drug or alcohol abuse, leading to bad decision-making, leading to prison and more trauma. She illustrated effective intervention with a client profile.

Mr. A is a 62-year-old African American for whom schizophrenia treatment was mandated as a condition of his parole. The medication relieved his symptoms to the point that he could stop drinking, but he still heard voices, especially when he was stressed. The boundaries that defined what was inside him and what was outside were blurred. Walking helped him calm down and his stress was greatly reduced when he was moved from the community shelter to a single room.

Mr. A reported that he had begun drinking with his father when he was five and he was finally happy – alcohol was his only steady companion. He was sexually abused by an aunt for several years and witnessed violence between his parents and in society. When he was 12, in 1962, he and a cousin were walking home from Mardi Gras. They were taunted by white men who threw rocks at them, killing his cousin. The men were sentenced to three months probation. Three years later, Mr. A stole a car and was sent to an adult prison for three years.

Kita surmises that the feelings of sadness in Mr. A's childhood preceded his criminal behavior. Further, that he is also carrying the accumulated trauma of his parents and grandparents. He is now working on repairing relations with his adult child and trying to avoid passing this legacy on to future generations.

Dr. King exhorted us not to be satisfied "until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream."

Dees reminded us that Dr. King worried that our democracy, weakened by inequity, would crumble. He told the story of the prosperous walled city-state of Jerusalem around 900 BCE that had schools, courts and a large marketplace where area farmers brought their goods for sale. One wealthy farmer was disturbed that able-bodied people were begging for grain and others were grumbling over their treatment in the courts. He learned that those who were not part of the group in power had little access to good jobs and were treated unfairly by the legal system. This farmer – also known as the prophet Amos – addressed the city council and cautioned them that they would lose all they had unless they were fair to everyone. Unheeding of his warning, the city was destroyed soon after.

Rather than redressing the inequities and injustices in our land, our policies are exacerbating them, from privatizing prisons to making a quality education unaffordable except for the rich. Our future is in our hands. Martin Luther King, Jr. encouraged us to speak out and demand change, saying, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

**Rose Martin – she will be missed
1942 - 2013**



We just learned of the untimely passing on of Rose Martin on January 22, 2013. She dedicated her life to creating pathways for success for those in challenging circumstances. She was 70 years old.

For 25 years, Rose was the director of the Peace Neighborhood Center, where she, her staff, and volunteers provided essential services to people in need. She had many programs for kids and elders, in particular. Rose also provided individual counseling, and for some years shared her wisdom in an advice column in the Ann Arbor News. Groundcover recently wrote about her current work assisting released inmates re-enter the community.

Rose was a remarkable woman, whose gifts and dedication to others changed, even saved, many lives, and we will miss her sorely.

Sudoku ★★★★★ 4puz.com

1			4	6				
5					3		4	
3	2							8
			9	2				
2	5		3		4		7	9
				1	5			
8							3	6
7		6						5
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Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote

LS ORTB CMSTSFSG NEIIRLPS.

RW RI VPCVAI NEIIRLPS.

- BVPVR PVYV

HINT

d = N

Solutions on page 11

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcov-

er News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: contact@groundcovernews.com 734-972-0926

The Gettysburg Address

1. Semites
6. Dry
10. Charles
14. Explosive
15. "I shot a man in ____."
16. Teen model Simpson
17. "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new ____ in (22A) (33A) (36A) (43A) (49A) (62A)."
20. Graduates
21. Straighten
22. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
27. Affirms
32. Actress Banks
33. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
36. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
39. Witch antecedent
40. Incarnate
42. Marital nurses' group (abbr.)
43. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
47. 1949 movie, ____ a Male War Bride
48. ____ Hill, a district in London
49. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
55. Variety show
56. Color
62. Continuation of the quote (see 17A)
67. Irish county
68. Boast
69. Politician Sam and namesakes
70. Fictional tree-like creatures
71. Baseball player Powell
72. Sense

24. So long
25. Hungarian city
26. Evaluates
27. Ethiopian town
28. Blood vessel
29. Author Ferber
30. Remove
31. Food fish
34. ____ fool
35. Leave out
36. Work
37. Computer operating system (abbr.)
38. French ski resort
41. Unit of heat (abbr.)
44. Nocturnal bird
45. Actress Dandier
46. Chemical suffix
48. Copy

50. Wading bird
51. Fend off
52. Makes snug
53. ____ Lingus
54. Indicate ascent
57. Monthly payment
58. Color
59. Sisters
60. Actor Robert
61. If not
63. Recede
64. Twilight character
65. Religious principle
66. Chicken product

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

February Calendar of Events

- February 7 – 3rd Annual Saline Area Schools “Empty Bowl Project,” 5:30-7:30 p.m. Food Gatherers benefit includes silent auction of “celebrity bowls,” food prepared by Saline School’s Culinary Arts Department, and music entertainment. Saline High School Commons, 1300 Campus Pwky., Saline, Michigan, 48176. More info: (734) 761-2796, www.foodgatherers.org.
- February 7 – Sun Come Up, 7 p.m. Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary Short about the Carteret Islanders facing the realities of life as environmental refugees. St. Francis of Assisi Music Room, 2250 East Stadium Blvd., Ann Arbor.
- February 9 – Pioneer Women’s Ice Hockey Team Spirit Game & Fundraiser, 7 p.m. Food Gatherers benefit providing up to 15 nutritious meals for every five dollars donated at the door. PWICE plays Grosse Pointe South High School. Veterans Memorial Ice Arena, 2150 Jackson Ave., Ann Arbor. More info: (734) 761-2796, www.foodgatherers.org.
- February 16 – 5th Annual Ford Lake Frozen Leap, 9:00 a.m. - noon. Jump into a freezing cold lake to raise funds for SOS Community Services, which serves at-risk and homeless families in Washtenaw County. Lake Shore Apartments, 2500 Lake Shore Blvd., Ypsilanti. Registration and

donations: www.crowdrise.com/fordlakefrozenleap5.

February 16 – Forum: “Unstuck: Reviving the Movement for Social Justice, Human Dignity, and the Environment,” 12-5:30 p.m. Dr. Cornel West and Rev. James Florbes headline a public conversation on address such challenges as growing social inequality, mass incarceration, sustainable economic development, and climate change. The Michigan Theater, 603 E. Liberty St., Ann Arbor. Tickets \$25 for adults, \$15 for students. More info: (734) 668-8397, www.icpj.net/2013/unstuck-reviving-the-movement-for-social-justice-human-dignity-the-environment.

February 17 – 7th Annual Depot Town Chili Challenge, 3-5:30 p.m. Sample chili prepared by Depot Town restaurants and cast your vote for the best one. \$5 fee goes to SOS Community Services. Depot Town, Ypsilanti. More info: (734) 485-8730, info@soscs.org.

February 26-27 – 11th Annual Depression on College Campuses Conference: “Moving Toward Healthy Self-Care,” 12:30-6 (Sat); 8:30-4 (Sun). Rackham Graduate School, 915 E. Washington St., Ann Arbor. More info and free registration: www.depressioncenter.org/docc.

Crosstrax – adolescence shaped and recalled through Shania Twain’s music



by Danielle Mack
Groundcover
Vendor

Happy Valentine’s Day! I hope this February finds you in good spirits, with someone to love. If you don’t have someone to love, hopefully you’ll find someone this year.

Moving on from my last article, the next CD on this journey of old music, old memories, and relating to where things are now, is Shania Twain’s album, *Come on Over*. This CD came out in 1997, when I was 17 years old. This was my second non-Christian CD. I still remember walking into the Borders Book Store by my parent’s house in ’97 when this first came out. I saw the washed-out cover. Shania’s bright-red lips and bright-red blouse really attracted me to the CD at first. The remarkable contrast was a huge draw to me. I previewed the CD, and loved all the strong feminist power ballads. It was a fast favorite. I bought it the second I had the money!

This CD came into my life at a time when I was still very much in the closet about who I was. I did not know what a transsexual was. There was a lot I still didn’t know. I suppose you could say that Shania Twain in this CD was my Madonna. I was a sheltered child of a strong Christian family. Shania Twain’s music in this CD was powerful, moving and more sensual than anything I had heard or seen before.

This CD was my escape from the sheltered life of a Christian boy into the life of a strong, assertive woman – I protected it with my life! I also listened to it a lot. This was the one CD to listen to whenever I would dress up and imagine myself as a woman. I would sit there in front of the mirror all dressed up, listen to the CD and think, talk to my female self, and ponder questions about who I was; why was this such a strong part of me, what it all meant.

I was helping to run sound at my church’s college and young adults Sunday morning class when this CD was stolen in the winter of 2001-02. It was in my Pepsi CD case sitting up by the sound booth. I left to go use the restroom after class got out. By the time I got back up there someone had taken off with the case. All I had left of the CDs from that case were the ones I was using for the social time after class that happened to be in the CD player.



I never saw it again. At the time, things were just too hectic in my life to go hunting down a new copy. My finances were tight; eventually I forgot about it. Every once in a while I would see it in a store, but never had the money for it. When I started this quest of self-reflection and self-reclamation, this CD was at the top of my list. It could be said this CD helped to energize my transition and push me out of the closet.

Back in 2005-06, when I was considering a career in drag performances, I seriously wanted to try being a Shania Twain impersonator. In winter of 2006, I came out to my parents, who promptly kicked me out of the house and did not want to deal with a transsexual child of theirs. Unfortunately, I was REALLY broke then; no job, living with friends, almost no possessions. That was when my bouts of homelessness really began. I moved a lot of my stuff to storage, but soon I couldn’t even afford that. Eventually I had to cut my losses, donate most of my stuff to charity, and move on. I had put off coming out to my parents as long as I did because I feared they would kick me out and want nothing to do with me if I did. I wanted to have a plan, and be out on my own by the time I came out to them. Obviously that failed, and my worst fears were realized. I was homeless with

no job and no place to stay in a crashing economy.

Recalling this album brought all of that to the surface. It has some GREAT songs. One that I do not believe will ever lose any of its original meaning for me is the first song on the album, “Man I Feel Like A Woman.” For me, growing up as woman trapped in a man’s body, this song put to words and music the embodiment of what I wanted to be, what I knew to be true about me on the inside. Now, as I near surgery, and have had the opportunity to experience college

as a woman (as myself), and get some sort of a taste for what high school could have been had I been raised as the girl I knew I was, the song simply rings true, to the reality of how I feel and how much more I enjoy life now. The song just fits me; in the past, in the present, and probably in the future.

“Come On Over” used to have more appeal to me. The song talks of inviting others over to relax, recharge, and push on to pursuing their dreams. Before I was homeless, I had places to go to like my parent’s home, and my grandparent’s where I could relax, and pursue dreams, and invite others over to do the same. My parent’s door was open to helping people get on their feet, and while I stayed with them my door was similarly open. Now I am off on an adventure of my own, chasing after my biggest and most elusive dream: my surgery. I have no safe harbor such as my parent’s or grandparent’s home. All I can do is continue to hunt and work for that dream, as well as work on my degree. My housing options in college do not offer me the luxury of opening my door up to those struggling. My collegiate housing offers little in the way of

shelter from life’s storms, but it is what I have. I highly suspect, though, that once I have settled into my new career and new home, this song will definitely get its old meaning back.

“Black Eyes, Blue Tears” used to evoke very strong feelings for me and deserves mentioning. I was a woman being forced to live in a man’s body just to survive. My life was full of metaphorical black eyes and blue tears. I wanted to take a stand for myself, but not at the expense of a home and food in my tummy. Eventually, I did take that stand, and here I am today.

“Rock This Country!” is one song that I think has actually gained more and more meaning for me as time has gone by. As I learn to be more assertive and stand up for my beliefs, this song builds in meaning. With each article I write, with each paper and presentation I give, this song just builds in strength as I rock this country, educating people, and show them things they never thought of before. The world is changing around us, and we all need to learn to adapt.

If you are interested in helping me, please donate to my fundraiser for my surgery: <http://www.giveforward.com/helpabeautifuldaughter>. You can donate anonymously, or leave your name, you can leave an encouraging word or not. It is all up to you.

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EMOTIONAL INSANITY CALMED BY HIGHER POWER

BY DON DENEVE
GROUNDCOVER VENDOR

I'M AN ADDICT THAT THOUGHT INSANELY
USING GOOD AND BAD THOUGHTS PAINFULLY
NEVER KNOWING WHAT A HIGHER POWER COULD DO
NO THOUGHTS OF TRYING, JUST ALWAYS BLUE

DAILY CHORES DRIVING ME TO ANGER AND MADNESS
INSANE THINKING KEPT ME UNDER GREAT STRESS
ALL THOUGHTS OBLITERATED BY MY DAILY USE
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PAIN, I NEED A TRUCE

MY BRAIN CONSTANTLY IN MALFUNCTION
NEVER KNOWING WHEN THERE WOULD BE A JUNCTION
RATIONALIZATION WAS NEVER ON AN EQUAL PLAIN
I FINALLY REALIZED HOW ABSURDLY INSANE

STEPS ONE AND TWO HAVE BROUGHT SOME SANITY
SOMETHING, SOMEONE HELPING ME WITHOUT VANITY
A HIGHER POWER AS I UNDERSTAND IT TODAY
KEEPS MY PERSPECTIVE IN A CALM AND SPIRITUAL WAY

SPIRITUALITY HAS KEPT ME FROM INSANE THOUGHTS
NO LONGER WANTING TO USE THE ADDICTION I FOUGHT
PRAYER AND A HIGHER POWER IS WHAT I GAINED
TODAY MY SANITY AND SERENITY IS WHAT I'VE SUSTAINED
THANK GOD FOR GIVING ME BACK TO ME

POEM # 2

TO LIVE WITH FEAR HAS CONTROLLED MY LIFE
IT WAS TORN INTO ME LIKE A TWO-BLADED KNIFE
ADDICTION SEEMED TO SUBDUE THE FEELING
ALL IT REALLY DID WAS STOP THE HEALING

I PROTECTED THE DISEASE LIKE IT WAS A GEM
I DIDN'T REALIZE IT WAS LEADING ME TO POSTMORTEM
THE THINGS I DID TO PUSH DOWN THAT FEAR
IT JUST KEPT HAPPENING, SADLY, YEAR AFTER YEAR

FEAR IS SUCH AN UNDESIRABLE EMOTION
IT CAN TAKE OVER AND CAUSE SUCH COMMOTION
BEFORE YOU EVEN KNOW IT, YOU HIDE IN THE DISEASE
LONGING, YEARNING, FOR THE GREAT DARKNESS TO EASE

WHEN YOU AWAKE THINKING THINGS WILL BE DIFFERENT
IT POUNCES AND ATTACKS, IT WAS ALL IRRELEVANT
SO NOW I WILL PRAY AND ASK FOR GOD'S WILL
PRAYING, HOPING, TO CONQUER WITHOUT DRINK OR PILL

I SHALL CONTINUE WITH THESE HEALTHY THOUGHTS
LOOKING FOR THE SERENITY AND SANITY I HAVE SOUGHT
SO JUST FOR TODAY I WILL SEEK MY HIGHER POWER
AND NOT JUMP BACK ON THAT ADDICTION TOWER

Unread Verses

by Corey Edwards
Groundcover Contributor

I spend my time writing verses no one will ever read,
Staining the page with my thoughts when my heart starts to bleed,
They're melancholic and sad – on this we're all agreed?
Hope is like the rose in my heart strangled by the weeds.
I put one foot before the other 'cause I have to move,
Scars on my body and soul yet still so much to prove.
I take chemicals every night hoping they soothe
The angst in my brain which has driven me insane.
It would seem that pain is something on which I thrive,
I want my angst to go away maybe I need it to survive,
To write these pessimistic verses drenched in anguish.
My soul craves joy and bliss but this is just a wish
And if wishes were horses then beggars might ride,
And if false hope was heroin they all would have died,
But I take pride in knowing that I manipulate my pen
In such a way that I am esteemed by my friends,
But their praise is cold comfort when Hopelessness hits me,
She robs me of all pleasure savagely and swiftly,
I try to fight her but it's like my efforts are vain,
So time and again I sip from the goblet of pain
And get drunk till I feel only anger for the world,
Hoping that everything will die: man, woman, boy and girl.
But these are futile fantasies sterile puerile hopes
That I nurture feeling like my life went up in smoke,
I guess you could say that I choked on the morsel of life,
An insane love child nourished by anger and strife,
I constantly pop pills hoping in vain that they kill,
Thoughts that make my blood chill that constantly fill
The space inside my cranium that blinds me to the light,
But I continue in the fight enraged by my plight,
This pushes me to write but at the end of the day,
My verses may be tight but my skies are always grey.
But I play the cards I've been dealt: frail mental health,
Collecting welfare checks due to insufficient wealth,
I feel like I'm always losing while life passes me by,
Walking around with anger burned in my eye,
No one wishes to hear my tales of sorrow and woe,
So I pour them in my verses, fit them in my flow,
I'm wondering where Destiny will lead me, will she be kind?
At the end of the rainbow is it gold that I'll find?
Is there hope all around me and I'm simply blind?
Constantly drunk off despair as if it was cheap wine,
They say That I should do my best and God will do the rest,
But I don't really trust him, this I must confess,
The only state of grace I know is when I stain the page,
Trying to find redemption with my melancholic rage
I say many things that no one will ever heed,
So I spend my time writing verses no one will ever read.

Charles Dickens: a man of the people called for a more humane and just world

by Karen L. Totten
Groundcover Contributor

February 7, 2013 marks the 201st anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens, to many people's minds the greatest British novelist and a man of deep affinity for the poor. Dickens' astute criticism of social and political structures and how they serve to perpetuate human misery are, sadly, still timely.

Dickens' books cataloged a whole panoply of oppressive and deplorable conditions in mid-19th century England, and brought awareness so change could occur. For example, after the publication in 1838 of Nicholas Nickleby, a critique of harsh English boarding school practices, change in the educational process began to occur. Dickens was threatened with defamation lawsuits by several irate school headmasters; the lawsuits were for naught, even while many schools changed their ways or closed, instead.

Again, after the publication of Little Dorrit in 1855, awareness and public opinion brought about by the book were instigators for change. In Little Dorrit, Dickens portrays the horrible conditions of debtor's prisons. One of the main characters, John Dorrit, is the faintly-disguised father of Charles, whose family spent time in Marshalsea Prison in London when Charles was about 12. The novel helps shed light on the inhumanity and wrongheadedness of imprisoning a person indefinitely for debt. Six year after its publication, the English government passed a bill, The Bankruptcy Bill, which limited imprisonment for debt to one year. While not a cure for the dilemma, it was an improvement.

Others of Dickens' novels address social issues. In Oliver Twist (1837) and again in The Olde Curiosity Shop (1840), Dickens portrayed the plight of many London children, who were orphaned like Oliver or otherwise left to suffer at the hands of scoundrels,

or living in poverty under the sway of creditors. In Dombrey and Son (1846), Dickens addresses the “subsuming of poetry, philosophy and life itself to business, business, business,” as Henry David Thoreau stated it; while in Bleak House (1851), Dickens satirized Britain's legal system, and Hard Times (1854) attacked industrial conditions in England. George Bernard Shaw noted that Hard Times illustrated that “it is not our criminals but our magnates who are robbing and murdering us and [the core of corruption is] the entire social system.”

Dickens never forgot that he was once poor himself, working in a blacking factory, his family in prison. He insisted that his novels be published as “numbers”, i.e., installments at a price that everyday people could afford. He believed, as Eleanor Ayers writes in The Importance of Charles Dickens, “the poor had a right and a need to read as well as the rich and educated.”

It is in A Christmas Carol (1843), perhaps Dickens' most popular work, that he exposes the “callous attitude

of the English mercantile system toward the poor and underprivileged,” as Ayers puts it. It is to Bob Cratchett and his struggling family that our sympathies are drawn in this book. Scrooge's restoration to his humanity is very important, but Dickens wants us to really understand the plight of the poor, and by taking us inside the life of Bob and his humble family, Dickens helps us to see their struggles and the fear they have for their own futures and that of their children. Lives like Tiny Tim's can be saved, Dickens is suggesting, by changing our policies and attitudes toward the poor.

An underappreciated, though vastly important commentary is made by Dickens almost as an aside when Scrooge asks the Ghost of Christmas Present about the shadows he has observed hiding beneath the Ghost's robes. They are the boy Ignorance and the girl Want, the Ghost explains. “Beware them both, but especially Ignorance,” he warns. Clearly, Dickens was pointing out the danger of keeping the masses uneducated and starved of life's basic necessities. One can see the chilling result of such deprivation in the classic A Tale of Two Cities (1859) where the rich and powerful quite literally are met with death as a result of their oppressive rule of the French people.

But it is not Dickens' intent to threaten the upper classes. He writes with great style and dignity of the many reasons to bring about a more just and humane world. As Eleanor Ayers writes, “Dickens knew the poor like no other writer, and because the poor are universal, he spoke for them worldwide.”

Perhaps in our present age, we can utilize some of the lessons he taught.

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Beef stew, good for cold winter days!

by Lisa Sonnenburg
Groundcover Contributor



- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 2 Tbsp cooking oil | 1 cup potatoes, chopped |
| 1 lb stewing beef | 1 cup carrots, chopped |
| 2 cups beef stock (or bouillon cubes) | 1 large onion, chopped |
| 1 tsp salt (omit if using bouillon cubes) | 2 stalks celery, chopped |
| 1/2 tsp black pepper | 1/2 cup turnip, chopped |
| 1 Tbsp dried mixed herbs or 4 Tbsp fresh mixed herbs (oregano, basil, thyme, marjoram, parsley) | 1 parsnip, chopped |
| | 1/4 cup flour and water |

Heat oil in large stock pot on medium heat. Brown beef on all sides. Add stock and seasonings and simmer for 1 hour. Add all vegetables and simmer for another 1 to 1½ hours. Thicken with flour and water mixture. Season to taste and simmer for another 15 minutes. Serve with biscuits or bread.



Worship with us Sundays
8:00, 9:30, 11:00 and 5:00

Add Wednesday Worship
February 14 at 5:00 and 7:30



Yet even now,
says the Lord, return to
me with all your heart.
Isaiah 61:2

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Strange (but Mostly True) Stories About a Mother and her Daughter • Cy Klone © 2013

<p>So, you ready to watch the humans go crazy over Valentine's Day this next couple weeks?</p> <p>You mean the day people traditionally give moderately expensive yet superficial tokens of love like flowers, candy and jewelry?</p>	<p>That's the one. People are so big on their "days". A day for love, a day for thanksgiving. Now they even have "days" for talking like pirates and honoring specific foods.</p> <p>As a cat, I can't at least some of those things worth celebrating?</p>	<p>Well, National Fish Day certainly has a special place in my heart along with the related Salmon and Tuna Days.</p> <p>But why celebrate on one day what could be celebrated and honored year round?</p>	<p>Maybe humans have developed even shorter attention spans than ours.</p> <p>Happy Love Year, Mom!</p>
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